

March 8, 2021

TO: The Honorable Winfield, the Honorable Representative
Stafstrom and members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary

I am writing in support of Raised Senate Bill No 1019. My name is Mary LaPorte and I am a member of GHIAA and a representative of the Hartford Monthly Meeting of Friends (Quakers). I have been a resident of Hartford since 1970 and my husband and I raised our family here. We have many friends and acquaintances who live in Hartford and represent the racial and social diversity of that city. I have seen first hand the personal damage and erosion of our society due to a law that does not allow an individual to realize his or her full human potential.

I can tell you the personal story of a close friend's siblings. My friend was fortunate to graduate from high school and soon found life long work in a local library. His brothers were not so fortunate. Both served time and sought to reenter society and gain meaningful employment – in fact any lasting employment. One of the brothers died in his early forties in a tragic automobile accident. He left one son who, as a middle school student, struggles to see a way forward. The other continually fights against discrimination in employment. Even though the “ box” is no longer allowed on applications, background checks soon uncover his prison record. If he lies he will be caught. The record has become a barrier to moving forward. **As is known by the data a criminal record reduces a job seeker's chance of getting a call back or a job offer by nearly 50%. The potential of these two lives was greatly diminished by the laws currently on the books in CT. What a difference it would have made to these men, their families and our society if their records had been expunged.**

Sincerely,
Mary LaPorte